

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DHA-02 IO-13

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P 041536Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6510

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 1994

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: LIBERAL PARTY CONVENTION

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 1891

1. BYVIN SUMMARY: THE LIBERAL PARTY CONVENTION WAS HELD IN TEGUCIGALPA ON APRIL 29 AND 30. AS EXPECTED, LONG-TIME LIBERAL PARTYHTLEADER MODESTO RODAS ALVARADO REMAINED FIRMLY IN CONTROL OF THE CONVENTION. THE PROGRESSIVE WING OF THE PARTY, REPRESENTED BY THE LIVERAL ALLIANCE OF THE PEOPLE (ALIPO), WALKED OUT OF THE CONVENTION AFTER REFUSAL BY THE RODAS-CONTROLLED DIRECTORATE TO CONSIDER VARIOUS OF THEIR PROPOSALS. THE BASIC DIVISION WITHIN THE LIBERAL PARTY CONTINUES AS BEFORE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE LIBERAL PARTY CONVENTION WAS HELD APRIL 29 AND 30 IN TEGUCIGALPA AMID EXTENSIVE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE EVENT. THE CONVENTION WAS COMPLETELY CONTROLLED BY LONG-TIME LIBERAL PARTY LEADER MODESTO RODAS ALVARADO. SEVERAL PROMINENT MEMBERS OF THE SO-CALLED DEMOCRATIC LEFT OR ALIPO WERE IN ATTENDANCE AT THE INITIAL STAGES OF THE CONVENTION, INCLUDING RAMON VILLEDA BERMUDEZ AND THE WIDOW OF FORMER PRESIDENT VILLEDA MORALES, MRS. ALEJANDRINA BERMUDEZ DE VILLEDA MORALES. INITIAL REMARKS FROM MEMBERS OF THE ALIPO WERE MET WITH CATCALLS AND SHOUTING
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AND WERE RESPONDED TO BY RODISTAS IN SARCASTIC TERMS.

3. FINALLY, A MOTION PRESENTED BY MRS. VILLEDA MORALES TO APPORTION THE NEW NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF THE LIBERAL PARTY AMONG THE VARIOUS FACTIONS OF THE PARTY WAS DECLARED OUT OF ORDER BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONVENTION WITHOUT DISCUSSION. THIS LED TO A WALKOUT BY MEMBERS OF THE ALIPO. VILLEDA BERMUDEZ

CHARGED THAT THE RODISTAS WERE ATTEMPTING TO UTILIZE HIS FATHER'S NAME WITHOUT ANY RESPECT FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES FOR WHICH HE STOOD.

4. RODAS GAVE A SPELLBINDING ADDRESS TO THE CONVENTION WHICH WAS CARRIED LIVE BY LOCAL TELEVISION AND RADIO. THE SPEECH WAS ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED BY THE REMAINING DELEGATES AT THE CONVENTION. THE CONVENTION THEN WENT ON TO ELECT RODAS' HANDPICKED SLATE FOR THE NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF THE PARTY BY ACCLAMATION. ONE MEMBER OF THAT SLATE HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF THE ALIPO. THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE PARTY IS DR. ROBERTO SUAZO CORDOVA. THE NEW DIRECTORATE, CONTROLLED BY RODAS, WILL HEAD THE PARTY FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS, INCLUDING DURING THE PROJECTED 1979 ELECTIONS. RODAS, IN HIS SPEECH, CLAIMED TO BELIEVE IN CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR'S SINCERITY IN PLANNING TO HOLD THOSE ELECTIONS.

5. BEGIN COMMENT: AS EXPECTED, RODAS REMAINS FIRMLY IN CONTROL OF THE LIBERAL PARTY MACHINERY, WHICH HE LIKELY HOPES TO SUPPORT HIS OWN CANDIDACY FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN 1979. THE FAILURE TO ACHIEVE ANY TYPE OF UNITY WITH ALIPO OPENS THE POSSIBILITY OF ANOTHER LIBERAL PARTY CANDIDATE FOR THAT ELECTION. IN SPITE OF TECHNICAL GOH PROHIBITIONS ON POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITY, THE CONVENTION WAS HELD OPENLY WITH NO GOH INTERFERENCE. THIS IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE FREEDOM ENJOYED BY THE HONDURAN POLITICAL PARTIES, INCLUDING THE RECENT NATIONALIST PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING, TO THE RIGHTS OF ASSEMBLY, EXPRESSION AND DISSENT, WITH PRESS COVERAGE OF SUCH MEETINGS. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH ONGOING POLITICAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES
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IN HONDURAS. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Sent Date: 04-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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